



Press Release

## **COAI welcomes DoT's Advisory to State Governments on Mobile Tower Guidelines**

**12<sup>th</sup> August 2013, New Delhi:** The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) welcomes the DoT's advisory guidelines to state governments for issue of installation of mobile towers. COAI believes they will serve well in eradicating the confusion/inconsistencies lying with various local and state level authorities regarding installation and operations of mobile towers. The guidelines are also focused on speedy development of the national telecom infrastructure and have been finalised post consultations and deliberations with the respective state government officials and relevant stake holders. These guidelines are issued in supersession of all earlier guidelines on the subject.

Firstly, the guidelines encourage a nominal one-time fee, single window clearance, and electricity connection on priority for mobile towers. These are welcome steps for the industry which has been contending with a complex system and procedural delays which are hindrance towards the much required development of telecom infrastructure in the country. The guidelines do not suggest any exclusion area where towers maybe installed or located.

“ We are working closely with the DoT to ensure that all safety norms are made universal and fears of the public about the telecom towers are removed”, said Mr Rajan S Mathews , Director General , COAI. The finalisation of the guidelines for installation of telecom towers and establishment of a portal indicating all emissions levels of all antennae will provide comfort to citizens about the safety of the towers and its emissions, Mr Mathews pointed out.

Another positive aspect of the guidelines is a clear distinction and segregation of emission (EMF) aspects from structural requirements. The new guidelines have clearly stated that EMF aspects, compliance of RF exposure field emissions, issues related to SACFA, licence etc. are to be handled solely by the DoT's TERM Cells and they will have the responsibility to audit the emission levels from mobile base stations and to ensure that all general public areas are within safe EMF exposure limits as prescribed by DoT. The guidelines also clarify that no suo-moto demolition or sealing of a mobile tower for EMF related issues will be permitted without the consent of the TERM Cell.

Also, on EMF aspects, an acknowledgement issued by the DoT's TERM Cell on self-certificates submitted by the telecom service providers will be considered acceptable and sufficient. At the same time, it has also been mandated that BTS certificates saying sites are with in safe limits are required to be submitted periodically as per TEC format for all existing sites. This will ensure a critical check on both new as well as existing base stations in the country.

The Government's plans to educate people on EMF emissions from mobile towers through educational programmes and publications are also a welcome step for the industry. A web portal too is in the making and will soon be available to the public for transparent and easy access to the details of emission levels of mobile towers.

**About COAI:**

The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) was constituted in 1995 as a registered, non-governmental society dedicated to the advancement of communication, particularly modern communication through Cellular Mobile Telephone Services. With a vision to establish and sustain a world-class cellular infrastructure and facilitate affordable mobile communication services in India, COAI's main objectives are to protect the common & collective interests of its members. (<http://www.coai.in/>).